

Vulture/Raptor Husbandry Guidelines for Young Chicks

Training given in Pokhara 25-28th March 2008

To: Kalpana Thapa, Hari Chandrebot, Ranjan Choudhary

Food Storage

Hygiene in food preparation area.
Routine for freezing and thawing food.

Food Preparation

Washing hands.
Checking the quality of the food (fresh etc).
Crushing large bones to right size suiting birds ages.
Amounts for birds in current stage of development; made aware of increase with age.
Cleaning routine once food is prepared- cleaning area, utensils etc.
Emphasis on making sure NO food is left for wild birds or rodents to feed on.

Feeding

Washing hands.
Approaching aviary; quietly, listening and looking.
Observation of the birds- what are they doing, are any close to the doors as you are about to enter.
Washing feet before entering aviary.
Quickly and quietly check the birds when in side the aviary- are the older birds with the younger birds, is there anything abnormal (excess left over food etc)
Make sure all of the birds are clean and well. Check the feather growth on younger birds; is it progressive, any signs of fret marks (not getting enough food, stress).
Observe the birds feeding through spy holes (if possible).
Observe the birds after they have finished eating; checking that all of the birds have eaten (if not why not?). Take out any left over food.
Cleaning up, washing hands, cleaning all equipment and food preparation area.
Waste management, where is old food going, is it out of reach from wild birds and rodents.

Handling:

Safety measures (gloves, eye protection (sunglasses and peaked cap).
Handling procedures; taking the birds by the head first and always keeping a firm grip, then securing there wings, body and feet.
Correct way to place birds into travel boxes (letting go of head last)
Making sure the boxes are secure, dark and not in direct sunlight.
Possible risks in transporting birds; heat, stress, throwing crop.

Aviary

General husbandry; cleaning baths and taking out old food etc.
New nesting material once old is dry.
Signs of sick birds- Feather growth, not eating, dull eyes.

Training and notes given by:

James Irons, Michelle King, Scott Mason & Richard Cuthbert